

Norma joined Related Companies in December 2002 as a Property Manager of Gateway Center in East New York, Brooklyn. Norma's successful operations of Gateway Center and her excellent relationship with the tenants and the local community is a valuable contribution to Related's development efforts in the New York area.

Norma currently resides in Queens, New York along with her husband of twenty years, Kenneth and three children Brian & Brandon ages seventeen and Nia age twenty.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Mrs. Bang for her extraordinary accomplishments and her spirit which reflect the best our nation has to offer.

RECOGNIZING THE 450TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LATVIAN JEWISH COMMUNITY

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 22, 2011

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in celebration and recognition of the 450th Anniversary of the Latvian Jewish community. Since the late 1500s, the Jewish people of Latvia have demonstrated incredible perseverance and courage through inconceivable trials and persecutions. As we reflect on this milestone anniversary, let us remember their history and celebrate their future.

The first Jewish settlements in Latvia appeared in the late 16th century. Through steady immigration, expansion, and steadfast resilience, the community grew and spread across the country. As the Jewish population expanded, they contributed immeasurably to the economic, industrial, and cultural development of Latvia. These accomplishments came despite frequently being forced to cope with anti-Semitic laws and cultural prejudice. By the late 1930s, approximately 93,000 Latvian Jews were living and prospering in the country.

In the summer of 1941, Nazi troops occupied Latvia. Within days of the occupation, the Nazis issued special decrees restricting Jewish rights and establishing ghettos. Jews from surrounding countries were forcibly transported to Latvian camps. Tens of thousands were murdered.

By the conclusion of World War II, tragically, only 14,000 Latvian Jews remained. In the years after, Jews from surrounding regions relocated in Latvia—rebuilding their community to more than 36,000 people. In the aftermath of the greatest evil ever perpetrated against a people, the Latvian Jews marched on—restoring their culture and society, fighting against the oppression of Soviet rule. Latvia became one of the centers of Zionist dissidence and Jewish national movements in the Soviet Union. Jewish activists struggled for the right to immigrate to Israel and to openly honor the memory of Holocaust victims. Thousands emigrated to Israel, the United States and Western Europe.

Today, the Latvian Jewish community of 13,000 is experiencing a rebirth. On this, their 450th anniversary, the Jews of Latvia can look back on their history with a solemn pride. Having suffered through terrible hardship, the Latvian Jewry is rebuilding its religious and social

life—revitalizing the community's enduring spirit.

I would like to extend special recognition to the Latvian Council of Jewish Communities and the United States Commission for the Preservation of America's Heritage Abroad for organizing the extremely successful memorial project at Riga, Latvia's oldest Jewish cemetery. Under the leadership and guidance of Chairman Warren Miller and Commissioner Lee Seeman, the memorial at the Old Jewish Cemetery reminds the world of the tragedy of the Jews killed during World War II and asks us to strive for a better future. I am proud to celebrate the Latvian Jewish community's historic anniversary. I ask all my colleagues to join me in recognizing their past perseverance and achievements, and in extending our sincere best wishes for their future success and prosperity.

IN HONOR OF CAPTAIN JAMES R. KNAPP COMMANDING OFFICER, NAVAL AIR STATION, LEMOORE

HON. JIM COSTA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 22, 2011

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Captain James R. Knapp upon his retirement from the United States Navy.

Captain Knapp is the Commanding Officer at Naval Air Station, Lemoore (NAS Lemoore). He has served the United States Navy with distinguished service during the 27 years of his naval career. His devotion to the Navy and the Nation is inspiring.

My initial experience with Captain Knapp began in 2008, when his service commenced as Commanding Officer for Naval Air Station Lemoore, which is located in my 20th Congressional District in Kings County, California. From our initial meeting, a great working relationship was formed. Whether we needed clarification on a question or a follow up on issues regarding the base, the Captain was always professional, knowledgeable, courteous and helpful.

Captain Knapp attended Texas A&M University and was a member of the Fighting Texas Aggie Corps of Cadets. He graduated in 1984 with a Bachelor of Arts in History. Captain Knapp was commissioned as an Ensign for the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps (NROTC) program and completed advance flight training in 1986, receiving his orders to the "Rough Raiders" of VFA-125 for F/A-18 FRS training. His naval career was commensurate with his education, earning his Master's degree in National Security and Strategic Studies at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He has over 3,500 flight hours in the F/A-18A-E series and 1,258 arrested landings on 11 different flight decks, six of which remain in active service. Furthermore, Captain Knapp participated in the USS Nimitz (CVN-68) Operation "Iraqi Freedom" 2003 deployment. Prior to his serving as Commanding Officer at NAS Lemoore, Captain Knapp served as Chief of Staff of Strategy, Plans and Assessment Directorate of the Multi-National Force-Iraq in Baghdad, Iraq.

In his illustrious career, Captain Knapp received many awards which include the Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal (3 awards),

Air Medal (2 awards), Navy Commendation Medal (4 awards), Navy Achievement Medal (2 awards), and Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (8 awards).

It is fitting that the President of the United States has presented Captain James R. Knapp with the Legion of Merit for his outstanding leadership. I ask that excerpts from the Citation be printed in the RECORD:

For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service as Commanding Officer, Naval Air Station Lemoore, California from September 2008 to June 2011. Captain Knapp's tenure as Commanding Officer of the world's largest Naval Air Station was exemplified by visionary leadership, mission accomplishment, and an unrelenting drive to improve the lives of Sailors and their families. Despite fiscal restraints and ever-changing requirements, his proactive engagement across the spectrum of strategic imperatives at Naval Air Station, Lemoore resulted in sustained five-star support to Commander Strike Fighter Wing Pacific, which has significantly contributed to the lethality of the U.S. Pacific Fleet. His tremendous foresight and business acumen prevented airfield encroachment and his direct involvement in water usage issues in the western San Joaquin Valley instilled new hope for local farmers and the regional economy. His personal involvement in the local community was highlighted by the establishment of a perennial Community Relations Program which contributed over 11,000 man-hours towards numerous noteworthy projects, further strengthening the relationship between the air station and the local community. Additionally, his overwhelming concern for his sailors was demonstrated by personally performing over 320 Career Development Boards, directly contributing to the professional, financial and personal growth of each Sailor in his command. Captain Knapp's superior performance of duties highlights the culmination of 27 years of honorable and dedicated service. By his dynamic direction, keen judgment and loyal devotion to duty, Captain Knapp reflected great credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Captain Knapp is a man of outstanding character and we will remain grateful for his unwavering dedication and exceptional insight during his career at NAS Lemoore and to our country. On behalf of the United States Congress, I wish to express my sincere gratitude for his hard work, selfless service, and dedication to the United States Navy. I want to personally wish Captain Knapp much continued success and my best wishes to his wife, Nancy and his children; daughter, Lauren, sons, Will and Ryan, as they embark on their new endeavors.

A TRIBUTE TO PASTOR GRAYLING FERRAND

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 22, 2011

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor Grayling Ferrand.

Pastor Ferrand serves on Friends of Recovery, a statewide grass root advocacy board because of his passion and firsthand knowledge of those impacted or affected by the disease of addiction. He is committed towards reducing the adverse effects of alcoholism and